

Message Text

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FOR S/NM AMBASSADOR VANCE AND NEA GRANT AND SCHIFFERDECKER

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SNAR, AF

SUBJ: MEETING WITH DR GHAUS

1. FOLLOWING IS UNCLEARED MEMCON FROM CONVERSATIONS AMBASSADOR VANCE HAD IN AFGHANISTN WITH DR SAMAD GHAUS (DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, MFA) ON NOVEMBER 11. ALSO PRESENT WAS: LEE O. COLDREN, POLITICAL OFFICER AND ACTING NARCOTICS CONTROL OFFICER. WOULD APPRECIATE S/NM ADVISE WHEN MEMCONS CLEARED ON CLEARED WITH CHANGES.

2. QTE: AMBASSADOR VANCE EXPLAINED WHO HE WAS, THAT HIS MANDATE FROM THE SECRETARY AND THE PRESIDENT WAS TO COORDINATE AND OVERSEE ALL UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS EFFORTS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE UNITED STATES COMMITMENT TO NARCOTICS CONTROL, THE DISRUPTION OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING SYSTEMS AND THE SEIZURE OF ILLICIT DRUGS DESTINTED FOR THE UNITED STATES REMAINED UNCHANGED. PREPATORY TO THE NEW DELHI REGIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL OFFICERS CONFERENCE HE WAS TAKING THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT AS MANY COUNTRIES IN THE REGION AS POSSIBLE SO AS TO EDUCATE HIMSELF ON THEIR PERCEPTIONS AND VIEWS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM AND ANY RELATED DOMESTIC PROBLEMS THEY MIGHT HAVE.

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3. DR GHAUS BEGAN BY STATING THAT THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN WAS SIMILARLY CONCERNED AND OPPOSED TO ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING AS HAD BEEN STATED BY PRESIDENT DAOUD SHORTLY AFTER THE COUP. HE STATED TPGT, AS AMBASSADOR VANCE UNDOUBLEDLY ALREADY KNEW, AFGHANISTAN WAS AN ILLICIT OPIUM PRODUCER AND THAT THERE HAD RECENTLY BEEN A SEIZURE OF HEROIN IN AFGHANISTAN THAT MAY WELL HAVE HAD AFGHAN ORIGIN.

4. DR GHAUS STATED THAT EXCEPT FOR THE USE OF HASHISH, WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED TO THE BAD EXAMPLE OF YOUTHFUL WESTERN TOURISTS, AFGHANISTAN'S DOMESTIC DRUG PROBLEM WAS LARGELY CONFINED TO THE TWO MAJOR OPIUM PRODUCING AREAS, BADAKHSAN AND NANGARHER. HE REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF OPIUM PRODUCTION IN THESE AREAS, STATING THAT WHILE TRADITIONALLY OPIUM HAD BEEN EXPORTED TO CHINA, ITS PRESENT DESTINATION WAS IRAN. DR GHAUS STRESSED THAT NOT ONLY WERE THE ECONOMIES OF THESE AREAS BASED ON OPIUM BUT ALSO THE POPULATION WAS ADDICTED, ONE REASON BEING THE LACK OF MEDICINES AND DOCTORS.

5. DR GHAUS STATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN WAS NO LONGER IN FAVOR OF THE PILOT PROJECT RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT UN/FAO CONCESSION IN LATE 1972, AND THAT THIS CHANGE IN ORIENTATION DATED FROM PRESIDENT DAOUD'S ASSUMPTION OF POWER. HE SAID THAT IN THE 1950'S AFGHANISTAN, ON THE URGING OF THE UN, HAD BANNED OPIUM WITH THE EXPECTATION OF UN AID IN DEVELOPING ALTERNATE MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD FOR THE OPIUM PRODUCERS - AID THAT NEVER MATERIALIZED. THE GOA DID NOT WANT TO REPEAT THIS EXPERIENCE AND WAS PRESENTLY STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF A MULTI-SECTOR ECONOMIC RESOURCE SURVEY ITP BADAKSHAN TO SET THE STAGE FOR A RATIONAL, NUOJOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROVINCE SO AS TO PROVIDE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO OPIUM PRODUCTION AS A MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD.

6. AMBASSADOR VANCE AGREED THAT INCOME SUBSTITUTION WAS SOMETIMES THE SOLUTION AND STATED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS VERY INTERESTED IN SUCH PROJECTS. HOWEVER, HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT IT HAD BEEN U.S. EXPERIENCE THAT DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT CONCURRENT ENFORCEMENT OF AN OPIUM CULTIVATION BAN RESULTED IN BIGGER POPPIES, NOT IN A CESSATION OF CULTIVATION. AMBASSADOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VANCE SUGGESTED THAT AS IRAN WAS THE MAJOR VICTIM OF AFGHAN OPIUM THAT IT SEEMED LOGICAL THAT IRAN SUPPORT SUCH EFFORTS EITHER BILATERALLY OR THROUGH A CONSORTIUM. AMBASSADOR VANCE ALSO SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY OF AFGHAN/PAK COOPERATION TO SUPPRESS OPIUM ALONG THE BORDER.

7. DR GHAUS DID NOT RESPOND TO THE SUGGESTION CONCERNING IRANIAN AID, BUT LAUNCHED INTO A CAPSULIZED HISTORY OF THE

DISPUTE OVER THE DURAND LINE. FINALLY, DR GHANUS HALF-
JOKINGLY CAUTIONED AMBASSADOR VANCE AGAINST BELIEVING
ANY PAKISTANI CLAIMS THAT MOST PAKISTANI OPIUM ACTUALLY
ORIGINATED IN AFGHANISTAN AND WAS SMUGGLED THROUGH THE
TRIBAL AREAS. UNQTE.
ELIOT

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